

VZCZCXRO2439
RR RUEHPW
DE RUEHBUL #1828/01 2030857
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 210857Z JUL 08
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4758
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
RHMFIUU/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 001828

DEPARTMENT FOR SCA/FO, SCA/A, S/CRS, EUR/RPM
NSC FOR WOOD
OSD FOR WILKES
CENTCOM FOR CG CSTC-A, CG CJTF-101 POLAD

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [AF](#)
SUBJECT: NURISTAN: NEW GOVERNOR, FRESH PRIORITIES

11. (SBU) Summary: Hazrat Din became Governor of Nuristan on July 5, replacing Tamim Nuristani. His priorities start with popular engagement and good governance, and he intends to establish representative district councils - shuras - for consultations on whom to nominate as district administrators and ministerial line directors. He will seek a close relationship with the Independent Directorate of Local Governance. The Governor views economic development and infrastructure construction as contingent on improvements in governance and security. Hazrat Din will involve the provincial ulema council in governance. As a former commander in the anti-Soviet war, a former governor, and a Foreign Ministry official (both overseas and in Kabul), Hazrat Din brings considerable experience to the position. End Summary.

A New Governor for Nuristan

12. (SBU) The President's office announced on July 5, 2008, that Hazrat Din would succeed Tamim Nuristani as Governor of Nuristan. In ten days of consultations, culminating in participation in an Eastern Region Governors' Conference in Asadabad on July 14, the new Governor developed the priorities for his tenure. The Governor sees economic development as contingent upon security and good governance.

13. (SBU) In discussions July 13 with U.S. civilian and military officials in Jalalabad, Governor Hazrat Din said his first item of business was the development of shuras (councils) in each of Nuristan's eight districts. The primary task of the district shuras would be to ensure security through popular involvement in governance. Crucial to the success of the bodies will be the extent to which they represent the people, said the Governor. He stressed the need to provide shura members with financial stipends, noting that a "100-man Shura" in Kamdesh district had never received the funds that President Karzai had promised in February. (Note: At the Governors' Conference in Asadabad on July 14, Jelani Popal, director of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG), said he would make funds available for Kamdesh "immediately." End note.)

14. (SBU) The Governor said his second priority is good governance. He expressed particular concern over the competence of district administrators and ministerial line directors. He noted that some lack capacity, and he plans to seek training and equipment for those people. Others are corrupt, and he will recommend their removal. He said he will ask the local people, through the shuras, to nominate replacements. It is also important to construct housing and offices for staff in Parun, the provincial capital, and in district centers.

¶5. (SBU) The Governor's third priority is development. The task is not "reconstruction," he noted, but new construction. However, development depends on governance. He told us that even the communist government had implemented a program of public works in areas it wanted to reward, and projects alone do not deliver stability.

Military Operations an Immediate Concern

¶6. (SBU) One of the Governor's most pressing concerns was the ongoing insurgent incursion in Bargimatal district, which borders Pakistan. At the Governors' Conference, Nuristani officials as well as Afghan military and border police requested logistical support from the U.S. military, which was duly offered.

¶7. (SBU) The Governor also expressed concern about reports of civilian casualties in recent actions by Coalition and Afghan forces in Nuristan. He said he had the names of civilians killed in the July 4 incident in Waigal district. We noted that the U.S. military's action had come in response to attacks. In addition, the July 13 attack on the U.S. positions in Wanat, which killed nine soldiers and wounded 15, indicated that there was considerable hostile activity in the area. The Governor undertook to consult with us closely on such incidents.

IDLG's "Man in Parun?"

¶8. (SBU) IDLG Director Popal made a point at the July 14 Governors'

KABUL 00001828 002 OF 002

Conference of listing three areas in which former Governor Tamim Nuristani had exhibited bad governance: the excessive amount of time he spent outside the province; allegations of misuse of public funds; and a failure to travel enough to the districts of the province. Popal said the new Governor needed to deal more effectively with the populace, and he urged the U.S. government, and especially the PRT, to help him get off to a strong start. Popal also noted that Hazrat Din had the support of the Nuristani parliamentary delegation (MPs Dad Mohammad and Hawa Alam Nuristani and Senator Noorullah Mameed).

¶9. (SBU) Popal's statements about the former Governor laid down clear markers for the new Governor. For one thing, Kabul will assess Hazrat Din's performance on the basis of governance, first and foremost. For another, IDLG will play an important role in judging the new Governor. Finally, the governor must get along with the members of the parliamentary delegation. (Hazrat Din made an important statement by bringing Dad Mohammad with him to meetings with U.S. officials in Jalalabad.)

Role of Religious Leaders

¶10. (SBU) Hazrat Din brought with him to the Jalalabad meetings the head of Nuristan's ulema council, Ayaulah Khayum. The Governor also noted that district shuras should coordinate their activities with the ulema council. It had been a matter of concern to many secular Nuristanis that former Governor Tamim had tried to work closely with the mullahs of the province. This seems unlikely to change.

Biographic Notes on Governor Hazrat Din

¶11. (SBU) Eng. Hazrat Din Noor Jalali, a native of the Titin Valley in Nuristan's Nurgram District, is 50-60 years old. His father, Wakil Alef Din, represented Titin in the Laghman Provincial Council in the 1960s. Hazrat Din's grandfather, Jalal Din, was locally prominent, and the Governor added the name "Jalali" in his honor. Hazrat Din studied engineering in Kabul, and he earned a degree in geology in Baku, Azerbaijan (then in the Soviet Union) during the Daoud regime (1973-1978). He also earned a degree in international politics from an on-line university in King of Prussia,

Pennsylvania.

¶12. (SBU) During the anti-Soviet war, Hazrat Din was a commander in the Titin Valley under Abdul Rab Rasul Sayaf's Et-ihad Islami. The government of President Burhanuddin Rabbani named him Governor of Nuristan in 1992, however, the province was never organized to any degree. Later, he was District Administrator of Nurgram District during the governorship of Sher Gul, the first Governor of Nuristan in the Karzai administration.

¶13. (SBU) He was Afghan Consul General in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, from 2002 to 2007. He then came to Kabul to work in the cultural affairs section of the Afghan Foreign Ministry. During this period, he became head of the NBCC construction company.

¶14. (SBU) Hazrat Din speaks English, as well as Russian, Arabic, Dari, Pashto, and the local Nuristani language.

¶15. (SBU) Addressed as: Governor Hazrat Din. (This is the Governor's stated preference. Nuristanis have no family names. If they require a name for official purposes, most assume the name "Nuristani" or "Noor," but prefer to use their given names. "Din" is not a family name, but an honorific that modifies his proper name.)

WOOD